

## Sleep No More

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/22501258) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/22501258>.

|                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Rating:          | <a href="#">Teen And Up Audiences</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Archive Warning: | <a href="#">Graphic Depictions Of Violence</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Category:        | <a href="#">M/M</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Fandom:          | <a href="#">Hannibal (TV)</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Relationship:    | <a href="#">Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Characters:      | <a href="#">Will Graham</a> , <a href="#">Hannibal Lecter</a> , <a href="#">Dr. Frederick Chilton</a> , <a href="#">Alana Bloom</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Additional Tags: | <a href="#">Sleep Deprivation</a> , <a href="#">Sleeplessness</a> , <a href="#">Hospitals</a> , <a href="#">Mental Hospitals</a> , <a href="#">Hospitalization</a> , <a href="#">Medical</a> , <a href="#">Medical Procedures</a> , <a href="#">Medical Kink</a> , <a href="#">Sedation</a> , <a href="#">Forced Sedation</a> , <a href="#">Non-con Drug Use</a> , <a href="#">Forced Drug Use</a> , <a href="#">Starvation</a> , <a href="#">Eating Disorders</a> |
| Language:        | English                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Stats:           | Published: 2020-02-01 Completed: 2020-02-23 Words: 17,618 Chapters: 14/14                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

# **Sleep No More**

by [roaming4040](#)

## Summary

Will Graham goes on a sleep strike after being wrongfully incarcerated at the BSHCI. Chilton is not happy with this.

# Chapter 1

It had been three days since Will Graham slept. On his fourth week of incarceration at the Baltimore State Hospital for the criminally insane, Will was overall known to be a decently obedient inmate, never causing any trouble up until this point. Recordings from the security camera in his cell showed Will pacing back and forth in his cell in the wee hours of the morning, restlessly moving from the bed to the bars to the sink, then back to the bed again to start the routine again.

Will's assigned nurses didn't say anything the first night that he didn't sleep. They assumed it was just nerves, so they didn't intervene much more than shouting "Graham, go to bed," at one point in the night, with Will ignoring them of course. It was the first instance of him directly disobeying orders by a guard or nurse, but they decided to let it slide for now. The following morning, nurses found Will sitting on his bed, eyes tired and back hunched slightly. Will was known to have a naturally tired-looking aura about him though, so no one really took notice.

The second night consisted of more pacing around the cell, washing his hands over and over again in the sink and sitting cross-legged on the bed, rubbing at his temples. The evening nurse wandered by his cell, observing him from a safe distance and taking minor notes.

Night three without sleep was when the staff truly began to worry. Will was found the next morning sitting on his cot, leaning against the wall behind him with a vacant look in his eyes. He was then shackled by his wrists and ankles and brought to one of the "therapy rooms," or in this case, being locked in an iron cage while Chilton glares at him condescendingly through the bars.

"How did you sleep, Mr Graham?" Chilton asked that next morning.

"...what?" Will asked after a pause that lasted one-second too long.

"...I said 'how did you sleep?' The nurses tell me you've been up for quite a while," Chilton repeated.

“I’ve been...restless,” Will answered through tired lids.

“That’s apparent. Tell me why you’ve been having trouble sleeping.”

“I don’t have to tell you anything, Fredrick,” Will snapped back.

“You understand that by depriving yourself of sleep, you’re opening yourself up to a plethora of health complications, don’t you?” Chilton hammered, placing his pen and paper down in his lap and giving Will a stern glare- like a parent lecturing their child on why they have to brush their teeth.

“...I don’t care,” Will answered.

“Well, it’s my job to care. You’re in my hospital and you’re my responsibility. I get no pleasure from watching you suffer, however if you’re trying to spite me with this kind of behavior, it’s not going to work,”

“This isn’t about you,” Will said groggily, raising his view up to look Chilton dead in the eyes.

“If it’s not about me per-say, then who?” Chilton asked, scribbling several notes down.

“... I’d like to go back to my cell now,” Will huffed quietly.

Chilton scoffed. “I decide when you can be returned to your cell. Now, would you agree that this new behavior of yours might be a reaction to your sentencing or past memories?”

Will didn’t respond, just maintaining firm silent eye contact with a low, tired expression.

Chilton stared back, then drew his attention back to his notes.

“I hope you understand the medical and psychological risks associated with lack of sleep; Depression, anxiety, agitation, cardiovascular and muscular issues, etcetera etcetera...” Chilton added.

Again, Will provided no response.

“Are you aware of the consequences for insubordination, Mr Graham?” Chilton asked finally, placing his pen down on his notepad and huffing frustratingly.

Will maintained steady eye contact, barely flinching at the threat.

The two men glared at each other through the bars, not sure who would give in first.

After a two-minute-long stare-down which felt like two hours, Chilton finally, reluctantly gave in, calling over two orderlies to escort Will back to his cell. The two men approached him, handcuffed him and shoved him along, Will’s feet dragging softly behind him as he walked.

## Chapter 2

On the fourth night that Will didn't sleep, Chilton arranged for the prison's physician to do a once-over on Will. At this point, Chilton considered that there might be an underlining medical issue that prevented Will from sleeping properly.

That afternoon, Will was escorted out of his cell once again and taken into one of the institution's interrogation rooms. He was propped in what looked like a dentist's chair and had his wrists and ankles strapped down. He didn't protest- he knew eventually the staff would suspect there was something physically wrong with him.

Not too long after the orderlies finished strapping him in the chair, an older man with cropped white hair, olive skin, and silver glasses and dressed in a white coat and carrying a notepad approached Will.

For the doctor, just the sight of the man was slightly jarring. He looked gaunt, pale in the face with heavy eye bags and deep, dark circles. His chest rose and fell unevenly under his prison jumpsuit and his fingers twitched lightly as they rested on the arms of the chair.

"Hello, Mr Graham. My name is Dr Ellis. I'm going to be examining you today," the doctor said, placing his bag down on the floor and beginning to set up his equipment on the side table next to the examining chair. Will looked up slowly, registering the man in front of him, but saying nothing.

"I'll take your vitals now. If you try to attack me or harm me in any way during the procedure, there will be immediate and severe consequences," Dr Ellis mentioned, removing a stethoscope, blood pressure cuff, and thermometer from the bag and setting them on the table.

Will nodded slowly, as if the weight of his head was almost too much to bear.

"Now, Dr Chilton tells me that you're having difficulty sleeping," Dr Ellis began, picking up the blood pressure cuff to carefully wrap it around Will's bicep.

Will only hummed softly in response.

“Have you been eating? Drinking?” Dr Ellis asked, inflating the cuff manually and eyeing the dial on the side.

“...Yeah,” Will answered in more of a croak than anything, as if it was the first time he talked in days.

“That’s good. Do you suffer from nightmares, Will?” he asked, scribbling down some notes before ripping off the cuff and placing it back on the table.

“Yeah...” Will answered again, keeping his gaze low to the ground, avoiding eye contact.

“How often?”

“A few times a week...I don’t really keep track,” Will answered honestly. “Not enough for me to purposefully deprive myself of sleep for.”

Dr Ellis paused, looked up briefly, then quickly looked away and picked up the stethoscope from the table and place the buds in his ears.

“I’m going to listen to your heartbeat now so I’m going to unbutton the top of your jumpsuit,” the doctor informed, approaching Will non-threateningly.

Will sat up a little higher, holding his head up so the doctor had easy access to his shirt. Dr Ellis carefully unbuttoned his jumpsuit, exposing the top of Will’s chest. He put a hand over Will’s shoulder, steadying him as he slid the disk of the stethoscope down under his shirt and over his right pectoral muscle.

“Deep breaths, please,” said the doctor quietly.

Will didn't register the command- just staring forward with dead eyes.

“Mr Graham?”

“...What?” Will asked, turning his head slightly towards the doctor, blinking softly.

“...Please take a deep breath,” repeated Dr Ellis.

“Oh, sorry...” Will said, taking in a slow steady breath.

The doctor furrowed his brow momentarily but let it go, focusing on listening to Will's heart. It was faint and much too fast to be considered a healthy heart rate. The doctor sighed quietly and moved the disk from Will's chest to the side of his back.

“Again, please,” the doctor ordered methodically.

Will obeyed, breathing in deeply again, this time exhaling with a weak cough.

The doctor pursed his lips and moved back, linking the stethoscope back around his neck and picking up the thermometer.

“Under your tongue,” he said as Will limply opened his mouth and allowed for the doctor to put the instrument in his mouth. Not too long after the temperature was read at a 102.5; a moderate fever. Dr Ellis wasn't surprised. Not sleeping for this long of a period usually results in a weakened immune system.

The doctor checked Will's eyes, ears and back of his throat with a penlight and pressed two finger to each of his wrists, checking his pulse points.

"I'm going to take a blood sample," he told Will, circling around him to his left side and with careful hands, fumbled with the chair's arm. With pressing a button, it slowly flattened, bending Will's arm straight, giving the doctor easier access to his inner arm. Dr Ellis took care in rolling back Will's sleeve up to his bicep and tying a tourniquet around his arm. He flicked the skin until a vein popped up and began readying the needle.

"Just a quick pinch," he said as he inserted the needle into Will's arm, watching the red bloom from the tip.

"Any headaches? Nausea or vomiting?" The doctor asked as he filled several vials with Will's blood.

"Yes, yes...and no," Will stated, not showing any sign of human emotion whilst saying it.

"I can prescribe something for the nausea," Dr Ellis mentioned.

*"I'm not taking any pills,"* Will grunted back, his speech slurring softly.

The doctor frowned subtly and looked up at Will, then back down to his notes, quickly making the note that "patient refuses to take any medication orally."

"Any particular reason why?" Dr Ellis asked.

Will didn't respond, staring blankly at the wall in front of him.

"...Very well, then," the doctor replied, writing an additional note saying: - *"will not explain why."*

“I don’t want to-“ Will finally spoke.

“You don’t want to-what?” Dr Ellis said, looking up from his notes.

“I don’t want to sleep,” Will answered.

That was the answer that he and Chilton had been looking for.

Dr Ellis finally removed the needle from the crook of Will’s arm, patched it up with a cotton ball and tape, and pulled Will’s sleeve down for him.

Finally, in a swift and professional manner, the doctor packed his instruments and materials and exited the room without a final word to Will. Not long after, two orderlies arrived to unstrap Will from the chair and tug him along back to his cell, where Will was sure he was to spend his fifth night awake.

## Chapter 3

Chilton was waiting outside the doors of the interrogation room after carefully listening to every word of the conversation.

Dr Ellis exited the room, doors locking behind him while Chilton hurried up to him from across the room.

“So? What’s wrong with him?”

“Well it’s not physical. Whatever it is, he’s in control,” Dr Ellis answered. “He’s physically exhausted and the lack of sleep is definitely taking a toll on his heart and lungs; high blood pressure, fast pulse, etcetera. His body is going to burn out if there isn’t an intervention,” the doctor said, stuffing his hand in the breast pocket of his white coat and pulling out a pad of paper and pen. He scribbled down several names of various drugs and handed the paper to Chilton nonchalantly.

“This is for nausea, this is for agitation and this one is for the migraines,” Dr Ellis explained, pointing out each drug as it was written. “He won’t take anything orally, so you’ll need to crush it up or get creative with it.”

“And this one- lorazepam?” Chilton asked, pointing out the last name on the list. He knew very well what lorazepam was and it’s highly sedating effects, but he just wanted to hear it from the doctor himself.

“200mg before lights-out. It has a strong bitterness to it so you might need to slip it in his coffee or something strong. There’s no medical explanation for his lack of sleep so he must be trying to test you. It’s not uncommon for patients to strike in one way or another like this,” Ellis told him.

Chilton hummed in agreement, shook hands with him and lead him out. He quickly filed the proper paperwork to order said medication. If Will was truly sleep-striking for spite, then it had to come to an end immediately-whether Will liked it or not.



## Chapter 4

That night, as Will lay awake in his cell, his gaze becoming even more and more vacant. Suddenly, two orderlies appeared carrying his dinner tray; a filet of fish, green vegetables, a dinner roll, and a cup of black coffee-with a little something extra in it.

Will took the tray politely and sat down on his bed, tray in lap. As he began eating his meal, Chilton watched carefully from the security cameras in Will's room. Both him and the guards watched as Will picked up the mug and took one hearty swing of the coffee. He winced a bit at the bitterness, but it didn't look like he suspected anything. When he finished his meal, he slid the tray out through the vent in the bars for the orderlies to take, then sat back down on the bed, resting his elbows on his knees.

Suddenly, Will felt an unfamiliar twinge of dizziness. He furrowed his brow, not understanding why he he felt this sudden loss of bodily control. He squeezed his eyes shut and rubbed them with his hands, trying to wake himself up to no avail. Will stood up from the bed, almost toppling over. He held onto the wall for support as he stumbled his way to the bars.

"...Hey...Heya, I needa'-I need-" Will slurred through the bars at the orderlies.

"Just go to bed, Mr Graham," one of the orderlies barked back.

"*No- no, I need a-*" Will just spilled back. It was clear that his mind was half-gone with sleep deprivation.

Suddenly, Will's legs buckled under him and he collapsed, falling back on his side with a thud. He tried picking himself back up but it was clear that he didn't have the strength to. Will let out an animalistic groan in frustration as he tried to turn lift himself up, when suddenly his arms also buckled and he fully collapsed onto his stomach.

He quickly attempted to sit himself up, but his strength was fleeting faster than he could keep up. In a matter of seconds, he was unconscious.

Once the orderlies were sure that Will was out, they unlocked the cell and marched inside. They took his pulse and checked his breathing once more before picking him up by his ankles and underarms and lifted him into his cot.

“Finally...” one of them mumbled to himself as they exited the cell, locking the door behind them, leaving Will in his drugged, but peaceful state of unconsciousness.

## Chapter 5

Will awoke the next morning laying supine on his cot. He stood still for a few seconds, staring at the ceiling and trying to recall the night before. He barely remembered anything about that night- all he knew was where and when he'd woken up just moments before- and it seemed very difficult in the moment to piece two and two together that he might have been drugged. He groaned softly as he tried to sit up, resting himself on his elbows. He felt lighter- his headache and joint pain was gone, yet groggy and unfocused. It was then that he realized his streak was broken. He groaned in anger, slamming his fist angrily on the bed.

“Good morning, Mr Graham,” a voice called from outside the cell.

Will looked up to find Chilton smirking at him from outside the bars, his silver cane in hand and his hair slicked back.

“Glad we finally broke you,” Chilton grinned.

“...You didn't break me,” Will growled back.

“You're weak, Will. You can't fight your own body in this way. This little game of yours had to come to an end at some point.”

“I'm not talking to you, Frederick,” Will growled back.

“How long were you planning on going, Will? A week? Two weeks?”

“I want to be alone now,” Will said quietly.

“I just hope you understand that all this counts as insubordination and will be met with punishment if continued. This is a game you cannot win,” Chilton added, turning on his heel

and exiting down the hallway out of Will's view.

Once he left, Will balled his fists together in white-hot anger and whispered "*Fuck!*" As loud as a whisper would allow.

—

The day passed relatively quickly. Will took his tri-weekly shower, read a few chapters of *Pride and Prejudice* in his cell, and ate his morning and afternoon meals. In the evening, Will sat with his dinner tray on his lap again, the cup of black coffee sitting ominously on the side. Will wasn't tired- he knew he'd spend the night awake or at least try to go as long as he could- a cup of coffee should help.

He took several gulps of the hot, bitter beverage and set it back down on the tray. Two orderlies watched from a safe distance out of Will's view as he finished the rest of his dinner. Suddenly, he began to feel the same spell of dizziness again.

This time, he knew something was wrong. This wasn't what being tired felt like. This was artificial- it wasn't real. He now remembered the night before- feeling the same dizziness only after he ate dinner. It had to be something in the food. They were drugging him- *Chilton* was drugging him. That's what he meant when he said "we finally broke you."

Will panicked, dropping the tray and hurrying over to the toilet.

The guards appeared from out of the shadows as Will stuck two fingers in his mouth to attempt to vomit up the drugs he was given. Immediately, Chilton's voice was heard over one of the guards' walkies; "Stop him, won't you?"

Suddenly, the guards clambered into the cell, grabbing Will from behind and slamming him to the ground on his back. Will tried to fight them off, kicking and struggling with everything he had in him.

“FUCK YOU, GET OFF OF ME-“ he yelled as the guards held his arms and legs down to the concrete floor.

“NO, NO, NO- GODDAMIT,” he screamed as he tossed his head from side to side furiously. Chilton’s footsteps were heard down the hall as the doctor hurried over to Will’s cell to watch the chaos erupt.

“Stop struggling, Will,” Chilton barked down angrily.

“NO! YOU SON OF A BITCH-“ Will screamed, continuing to struggle.

“Just lie back and allow the medication to take its course,” Chilton replied condescendingly.

Will growled and squeezed his eyes shut, fighting with every fiber of his body to resist the drugs swarming his system. A few moments later, Will’s struggling subsided and he lay placid and limp on the concrete floor, eyelids closing and breath regulating.

Slowly, the guards stood up, allowing Chilton to get a good look at his patient. He cocked his head softly as he looked down at Will. Will was an unusual case, but this situation made it even more unusual.

“Put him on the bed, please,” Chilton ordered as the men grabbed Will’s arms and tugged him up onto the cot. They arranged him to where he was laying on his back, arms laying flat at his sides, and exited the room, Chilton following close behind them. With a slam of the cell door and the sound of the lock snapping behind it, the three men left Will to sleep-winning the battle yet again.

Chilton turned a corner and headed back down the main hallway. He was buzzed out of the cellblock and headed to his office. He propped himself in his chair, reaching for the phone and dialed up the number.

“...Hello, Dr Lecter. This is Dr Fredrick Chilton from the Baltimore State Hospital for the Criminally Insane. I’m here to discuss Will Graham. Give me a call back when you have the chance.”

## Chapter 6

Will refused his breakfast of eggs and toast the next morning, not even touching the plastic cup of water presented alongside it. The staff was suspicious, but didn't look too deeply into it.

Then he refused his lunch.

Soon dinner came along- he refused that as well.

"He's not actually going to starve himself of food *and* sleep, is he?" one of Will's nurses asked another.

The other just shrugged in response. Will had become unpredictable at this point- but so had Chilton. The two men were dancing around each other- taunting and swearing at the other like lions in a den. It was both extremely unnerving and extremely entertaining to watch from an outside perspective.

"He's bluffing," Chilton concluded when the nurses discussed Will's sudden fast. "He's screwing with us and I'm not going to give in to his games. Let's see just how much he thinks he can take. I bet he'll be crawling back by tomorrow morning."

Tomorrow morning came and went- in fact, two more mornings came and went.

By the third day without food, water, or sleep, Will had become a husk of what he was. His face looked gaunt, cheekbones sticking out just a tad more than usual, but just enough to be noticeable. The bags under his eyes had returned ten-fold, and his clothes seemed to hang off him. His eyes looked sunken in and his stubble had turned into a short, shabby beard. His skin had turned pale, his lips were chapped and cracking, and he looked as if he had lost at least fifteen pounds in just those three days alone.

It was incredibly shocking for Chilton to watch his most famous and coveted patient turn into what he was. What once stood a scruffy, handsome young teacher and profiler was now a shell of a man, burdened by time.

Chilton began to quickly understand that the “let him burn himself out” or “wait until he gives up” methods were definitely not working. It was clear that Will wouldn’t give up as easy as they thought.

On the fourth day, Chilton had decided that he’d had enough.

At around 10:30am that morning, Chilton made several calls, then ordered Will to be taken to an interrogation room. At this point, Will didn’t even have enough strength to make the two-minute walk from his cell to the room, so they resorted to strapping him into a wheelchair.

They wheeled him down the hallway, Will’s vision swimming, barely able to keep himself upright. They pushed him through the doors and into the interrogation room, Will not even bothering to look up at the other person already sitting at the table in the middle. The nurses unstrapped him from the chair and dragged him over to other chair sitting behind the table. They forcibly grabbed both his wrists and locked them into the handcuffs bound to the chain in the center of the table.

The guards exited the room, locking the door behind them and allowing Will privacy with his visitor.

“Hello, Will,” a familiar voice called to him from out of the silence.

Will recognized the voice immediately and lifted his head, eyes wide.

“...Alana,” Will croaked.

Alana Bloom sat across from Will, long, brown locks swept to the side and sporting a sad, sympathetic smile. She wore one of her usual long-sleeve, floral dark blue dresses and a

black cardigan. She looked tired herself, but perhaps it was because Will's exhaustion seemed to be rubbing off on her. At this point, just looking at him could make you drowsy.

"It's good to see you. I wish it was under better circumstances," she spoke.

"I'm...sorry you have to see me like this," Will answered, his voice quiet and weak.

"You look like hell, Will," she replied honestly.

"Thanks," he responded.

She smirked and leaned over to dig her hand into her bag, pulling out a plastic bottle of spring water and setting it down on the table.

"I brought you something. Don't worry- it's unopened," she explained.

Will stared at the bottle of water.

"Can you drink something for me, please?" she asked. Alana spoke to Will as a concerned friend and less of a patient in a mental institution- and this almost made him trust her. His hands barely left the table.

"It's just water, Will. Nobody touched it."

"Please don't lie to me," he mumbled to himself.

"I'm not lying to you. Look-" she said, picking up the bottle and twisting the top off, hearing that soft 'crack' of the new plastic snapping. She shook the bottle for a few moments before

opening the top and taking a sip herself. She set it back down on the table, this time closer to Will's hands.

"See? It's fine. You need to drink something- please."

Will looked up at her with terrified eyes.

"Is this why they sent you here?" Will asked.

"Will, look at yourself. It's been four days. You're dying. You need to drink something or you'll die- I can't let you die," she answered. "Just please try to drink if you can. It doesn't have to be all of it."

Will inhaled shakily and reached for the bottle, grasping it shakily. Alana mentally noted that even his hands looked tired. He lifted it to his lips nervously and took several slow gulps of his first drink in what felt like years. It tasted incredible. He chugged the entire bottle in a matter of moments, setting down the empty plastic back on the table in front of him.

"Thank you, Will," Alana said.

"Why are you really here?" Will asked her, wiping his mouth clumsily.

"I'm just here to talk," she answered truthfully.

"What is there to talk about?" Will asked.

"Well we can start with why you've been depriving yourself of food, water and sleep," she answered in a very matter-of-fact way.

“So that’s why you’re here; because Chilton knows I’ll talk to you and not him. You’re his middle man,” Will snarled.

“I’m here because I care about you and I don’t want to watch you kill yourself. I don’t care what Chilton thinks- I care about you.”

Will didn’t respond.

“I was hoping to just talk with you for a bit if that’s alright,” she added.

She stood up and reached out to pick up the empty bottle, when suddenly Will flinched subtly- as if she was going to hit him across the face. She immediately stopped in her tracks.

“...Will? Would you...think I would hurt you?” She asked, almost heartbroken.

“I’m sorry..I..I don’t know why I did that,” Will responded after a brief pause.

“...It’s because you’re on edge- and paranoid,” she replied, the hurt leaving her voice. “*Really* paranoid, actually.”

“I’m sorry...” he replied.

“It’s not me who you should say sorry to. You’re doing this to yourself. We’re just trying to figure out why,” Alana shot back. “It would help a bit if you communicated with us about what’s happening.”

“...They’re drugging me,” Will replied, closing his eyes briefly.

“So I was told,” she answered, leaning back in her chair slightly.

“I hate being drugged,” Will emphasized.

“But you understand why they had to resort to that, don’t you?” Alana asked.

“I’m not going to be a puppet for Chilton,” Will snarled.

“...So that’s what this is about?” Alana questioned.

Will paused, looking up and making direct, uninterrupted eye contact for the first time in the whole conversation.

“...I think you should leave,” he repeated.

“What do you want, Will? Help me help you,” Alana shot back, ignoring his last statement.  
“Please...What do you want?”

“...I want to be in control,” Will finally stated.

Alana said nothing, but just as she was about to cast a rebuttal, a nurse opened the door and announced that her time was up. She turned to Will and smiled sadly. She reached out a hand to touch his, but stopped, and eventually retracted- afraid of hurting or startling him in such a fragile state. She stood up, collected her belongings and headed towards the door.

“Goodbye, Will,” she said quietly, and exiting the room, leaving Will alone with his thoughts.

## Chapter 7

That night for Will, the fifth night without sleep, was by-far the worst to get through.

He'd reached the point in sleep deprivation that he'd begun to hallucinate.

Around 11:15pm, the night nurses heard yelling coming from Will's cell. They hurried down the hallway and peered inside.

Will was up and walking- something he hadn't done for days. He was wearing a grey t shirt and blue, hospital-issued pants, and was doing his normal pacing, only this time mumbling to himself and shouting an occasional outburst.

"I DON'T WANT TO HEAR YOUR FUCKING SMOOTH TALK- I DON'T WANT TO HEAR YOUR VOICE," Will screamed. He was beginning to wake the other inmates in the cell block.

*"Shut up, Graham!"*

*"Shut the hell up, ya fuckin' loon!"* the other inmates beside him yelled from their beds.

Will began hyperventilating, pacing back and forth, rubbing his hands through his hair and intensely staring at the empty spot on his bed.

"I'm not giving in- I already told you- I'm not giving in!" Will yelled again- this time directed specifically at the empty spot on the bed. The guards suspected he was hallucinating someone sitting there, taunting him of some sorts. "It's YOUR fault! This is all your fault I'm in here!"

One of the nurses picked up his walkie and immediately phoned Chilton, who had abruptly decided to take on more evening shifts since Will's situation began.

“Dr Chilton, this is Flores and Tate. Graham’s beginning to cause a scene. Should we continue the current protocol or should we intervene?”

Suddenly, the little red light on the security camera in Will's cell flicked on, telling that Chilton was now watching the broadcast.

Chilton soon buzzed back; “What is he doing?”

“Just...yelling, acting like a madman. He’s probably beginning to see things at this point,” the nurse informed.

“...This is becoming quite an inconvenience...Ditch the protocol and just sedate him for the night. Midazolam. I’ll deal with this in the morning,” Chilton buzzed.

“Rodger that,” the nurse said, switching off the walkie as they both hurried back down the hallway. They returned moments later with handcuffs and a loaded syringe.

By the time they got to the cell, Will had taken off his t shirt and stuffed it into the sink and turned on the faucet.

The nurses knew immediately what he was planning on doing and barged into the cell, but Will was quick on his feet. As one nurse headed for him, Will backed up against the wall and took a quick turn, dodging him and jumping onto the bed. The nurses caved in on him, but in one swift motion, Will kicked the first square in the jaw, knocking him back. While the second nurse was stunned from watching a seemingly frail and decrepit man knock out his colleague, Will grabbed the syringe from his grasp and shoved it directly into his jugular, injecting all of the contents directly into his bloodstream. The man gasped and sputtered, dropping to his knees and quickly falling unconscious, a small stream of blood dripping from his neck. Will looked down at the two men he’d knocked out and almost immediately knew the severity of what he’d just done.

“Fuck...FUCK GODDAMMIT LOOK WHAT YOU MADE ME DO!” Will screamed at the third person he saw in the room. “LOOK!”

Chilton stared in awe from his office desk watching the security footage of what occurred and with the press of a button, he called in several more guards to subdue the feral beast that Will had quickly become.

Suddenly, the alarm in the cell block was set off and seven armed guards and three nurses raced down the hallway. They found the door to the cell wide open, but Will still inside, standing on his cot, shirtless and rabid, his stomach sunk in, his ribcage stuck out, the muscles in his arms and legs seemingly withered away. As soon as Will saw the officers, he jumped off the bed and tried to make a break for the door, but this time, he was forcibly grabbed from all angles and held down on the floor, lying face-upwards as the guards held down his arms and legs. Two of the three nurses tended to the unconscious other two, as the third approached Will with a new syringe.

"Mr Graham, please stay still- stop struggling," one of the nurses called out to him, but the man continued to writhe under the hold of the orderlies, as if he truly believed that he had a chance at breaking free from them and escaping.

"FUCK YOU!" Will screamed back in a hiss.

"Hold him steady," the same nurse instructed the orderlies.

“NO! GET OFF ME! GET AWAY FROM ME!” Will screamed, struggling violently as the nurse quickly with mechanical precision, stuck the needle into the muscle of Will’s upper arm and pumped the much-needed sedative into his system.

“AUGH! NO! NO, NO, NO!” Will screamed as the needle went in, thrashing as much as he could as the seven guards and three nurses watched in fascination as the man who hadn’t slept for almost a week finally began to sink into artificial rest.

“No...*Doctor Lecter...Doctor Lect-...*” Will groaned softly as he felt his body reject his commands. Finally, the drug had done its job and Will was unconscious.

“Let’s get him to the infirmary,” the nurse finally spoke as a gurney rolled up beside the door. They lifted him up by his limbs and propped him up on the gurney before strapping him in and rushing him to the intensive care ward of this hospital. Everyone had just about had enough of Will’s taunting so it was more than a pleasure to send him to where he couldn’t refuse the medical attention he needed.

Meanwhile, Chilton sat speechless in front of the monitor, wondering what he just witnessed. Will’s mention of Dr Hannibal Lecter were especially jarring, but if anything- it answered the question of who was the most important missing piece in this puzzle.

He quickly picked up the phone and made one final call of the night.

## Chapter 8

Hannibal and Alana arrived as early as they could the next morning. Chilton discussed with them Will's episode and how he had assaulted two nurses and this information was especially disturbing to Alana, who always knew Will as a nervous, but nonetheless charming, non-violent man. This was very out of character for him. However, she was aware of the damage that Will's strike was doing on his body and mind, and when she took that into account, she wasn't much surprised.

Hannibal, however, was extremely shaken by the news. By framing Will for the murders he'd committed, he knew Will would be less than pleased, but he never expected for him to resort to something like this. He'd been avoiding seeing Will ever since the first visit he had after Jack Crawford shot him down in Abigail's kitchen, disregarding many of Will's requests for him. Part of him wanted to forget about Will and put that part of his life behind him. He had finally found a proper host to place all the evidence and the blame on- now was the time to bury the dead horse in the ground-however, he couldn't bring himself to. There was always something different about Will that separated him from his other patients. He was an empath. He was dry, sarcastic, troubled, and a bit too trusting of Hannibal. How else could he have so easily placed the evidence from every one of his murders upon him? Will was an incredibly intelligent man, but he was a fool to trust Hannibal to the degree he did. Nevertheless, Hannibal never expected to feel the twinge of guilt that he felt in that moment.

As a tired, but determined Chilton lead Hannibal and Alana down the hallway of the hospital's infirmary. Both were extremely eager yet scared to see Will in the current state he was in, yet they proceeded nevertheless.

They turned a corner into one of the hospital rooms in the ward and were quickly buzzed in.

As soon as Alana and Hannibal walked through the door, their blood ran cold.

There was Will, or what was left of him, strapped to a hospital bed, tubes and wires surrounding him. His shirt was removed, showing his gaunt form, ribs visible through his sternum and heart monitors hooked to each side of his chest, beeping quietly in the background. His beard was trimmed and his hair was freshly washed and brushed to the side away from his face. He had an IV needle in his neck pumping fluids into his jugular vein and a feeding tube inserted in his left nostril- both were hooked up to an IV pole beside his bed. He had a breathing tube inserted down his throat, a pulse monitor clipped to his finger, and a

hospital band around his wrist, stating his name, age, sex, and that he was at fall risk. His arms looked like tree branches; thin and brittle, as they laid out at his sides over the covers, and his skin was pale and speckled with bruises. Overall, the man looked barely alive. If it wasn't for the subtle rising and falling of his chest or the occasional twitch of his finger, they would assume he was dead.

*"Dear God..."* Hannibal mumbled under his breath. This was the first time he had seen Will in weeks and the transformation was shocking.

"Oh my God, Will..." Alana breathed, putting a hand over her mouth. "Is he conscious?"

"No, we're keeping him under for the next several days to reduce the swelling in his brain. If he was conscious, he'd definitely cause us quite a bit of trouble in facilitating his recovery. Keeping him in a comatose state is the only way we can properly treat him without interruption," Chilton explained, pacing around the bed to Will's left side, leaning contrapposto on his cane.

Hannibal and Alana followed him, sitting down in the two chairs placed at Will's right beside the bed.

"How is he responding?" Hannibal asked, his gaze not leaving Will.

"Slowly, but surely. Chemical sedation doesn't work in the same regard as non-assisted sleep does, but it will help in reducing brain activity and anxiety, and in allowing his heart to rest. So far, under his time in treatment, he's been making slow progress," Chilton answered.

Alana looked up at the heart monitor beside Will's bed, studying the steady, shaky beeps the machine emitted.

"Oh Will," she mumbled quietly. Hannibal reached over and gently took her hand, smiling softly.

“He’s getting the help he needs,” Hannibal told her, squeezing her hand reassuringly.

She wiped a tear from her eye and turned back to Will.

“God...he’s just so *thin*. If he was any smaller, he wouldn’t exist,” she commented. “I’ve never seen him this way before.”

“The high-calorie formula we’re giving him should help overtime with his weight. We’re hoping to see him gain about five or six pounds back by the end of the week,” Chilton explained, trying to hide the pride in his voice at the feats of his level of care.

Alana pursed her lips, trying to conceal her annoyance for Chilton. All he could think of was how Will’s behavior made *him* look and not Will’s actual wellbeing. Not once had he mentioned the plan for after Will regained consciousness.

“That’s not what I’m worried about, Fredrick,” she bit back.

Chilton paused.

“What matters is that Will did this to himself. That’s what we should be worried about- not the number of pounds he’ll gain back from it. If we don’t treat the root of the problem, what is to say that he won’t try doing this again?” Alana asked Chilton in almost an accusatory manner.

“Alana-“ Hannibal butted in, but Alana wouldn’t let the topic go.

“When I spoke to Will, he said that he stopped eating because his food was being drugged. He said all he wanted was control, and your treatment for that was to take away even more power from him. All he has control over is his sleep and what he puts in his body, and you’ve taken that too. You made him believe his body was something to be fought over or won that at this point, I wouldn’t be surprised if Will was *actually* suicidal. What are you planning to

do when he wakes up and learns that you've kept him under for a week and stripped him of any control he thought he had left?" Alana asked the doctor.

"Alana, I'm sure this is not the first difficult case they've had," Hannibal intervened in defense of Chilton. "I'm sure Chilton's team has discussed Will's case and the many routes they can go in his treatment."

Alana removed her hand from Hannibal's grasp and set it in her lap.

"To be fair, Dr Chilton, it appears *your team* has failed to treat the source of the problem and instead, tried controlling the reactionary behavior to the problem. Someone needs to speak with Will and truly understand why he began this in the first place," Alana barked.

Chilton and Hannibal just stared back in silence.

Hannibal couldn't help but feel enormously guilty. The more that Alana spoke, the more he realized that this was all his fault. Will's episodes, his strike, and his self-expressed "lack of control" hit Hannibal like a boat. He realized that Will was the wrong man to frame.

"Dr Chilton, may I please speak to you outside?" Hannibal asked, desperate to change the subject.

"Of course, follow me this way," Chilton answered quickly, turning on his heel and exiting the room, leaving Alana alone with Will.

The two men entered the hallway and Hannibal breathed out a shaky breath and turned to the doctor.

"Dr Chilton, I-" he began, but Chilton quickly interrupted him.

"Dr Lecter, you're just the person I needed to talk to," Chilton spoke up.

“...Am I?” Hannibal asked, taken back.

“I spoke to you on the phone earlier, but there was much that I needed to tell you in person,”

Hannibal remained silent, allowing him to elaborate.

“You’re well aware that Will has had these...episodes in the last several days. We noticed, however, that it was actually...your name that he brought up several times during them,” Chilton described.

“...Really...” Hannibal remarked, interested in hearing more.

“In fact, during his most violent episode before we sedated him, we believe that he might have been hallucinating that *you* were in the cell with him.”

Hannibal furrowed his brow.

“We believe that his relationship with you might be the core of all of this. We were hoping you could speak to him once we’ve deemed him healthy enough to wake up,” Chilton explained. “Would that be something you’re willing to help us with?”

Hannibal gulped, suppressing his anxiety and nodded softly. “Of course, Fredrick,” he replied.

“Thank you, Dr Lecter. Now, what was it you wanted to speak to me about?” Chilton asked, resting his hands on the head of his cane.

Hannibal paused. He couldn’t for the life of him remember what he was going to tell Chilton.

“It...must have slipped my mind,” he answered honestly.

“Well we can work on that as well. Now, shall we?” Chilton replied quickly, gesturing back to the doorway.

When Hannibal and Chilton returned to the room, they’d found that Alana had untied Will’s right wrist from the sheepskin restraint and held his hand between her’s.

“Dr Bloom-!” Chilton angrily objected, noticing Will’s unrestrained arm.

“It’s fine. He’s harmless,” Alana reassured, stroking the man’s frail, bony hand comfortingly.

There was a brief pause before Hannibal rushed to her side and sat beside him in the other chair.

He reached out and entwined his fingers with Will’s, squeezing him gently and watching as his fingers twitched in his peaceful, asleep state. Then suddenly, Will’s hand unconsciously began to slowly ball itself around Hannibal’s. Alana covered a hand over her mouth as Will’s hand contracted around Hannibal’s endearingly. They both knew it was mostly due to reactionary nerves and not actually anything meaningful, but it was still nice to think that Will was trying to communicate them. Hannibal saw it less as a kind, forgiving gesture, but more of a venus fly trap closing in on its’ prey.

He squeezed back and smiled softly, trying to seem sympathetic, but all he could think about were the words he’d say to Will once he was awake and able to listen.

## Chapter 9

Days went by with Chilton still giving the order to keep Will under. The CT scan showed that the swelling in Will's brain has significantly decreased. They kept him hooked to the machines, which worked diligently on his behalf, nurses constantly entering and exiting the room to take notes and check his vitals again. They took his chest, waist, bicep and thigh measurements to check how much weight he'd gained back. He'd gotten back a good portion of the what he lost thanks to the fattening, high calorie formula they were tube-feeding him. Overall, he still looked fragile, but there was definitely an improvement to be seen, however Chilton knew that physically rehabilitating Will was only the easy part.

Alana visited almost every day, sitting by his bedside and reading to him, just like she did for Abigail what felt like lifetimes ago. She stayed by his side for as long as she was allowed to most days, including for blood tests, EKGs and brain scans. Will had been alone for so much of his life- she wouldn't let him be alone during this sensitive time in his journey.

Alana questioned if Will's family was in the know about what was happening, but upon closer investigation, Will had no family or emergency contacts registered in the hospital's system. Alana knew that he had a father who he was not in close contact with anymore and was easily able to find a potential number for him through the FBI's records. She quickly gave the line a call, asking for a "Henry Graham", and calmly leaving a message on his answering machine informing him of his son's condition and where to find him. She never got a response.

Alana realized that she was one of the only lines of support that Will had, so she took it upon herself to be his consultant. It was extremely difficult seeing Will in the state he was in, however arriving each morning and seeing him a little healthier, or having a little more color in his skin, or a little more meat on his bones made everything worthwhile to her. She didn't know if Will would be appreciative or embarrassed if he knew, but it didn't really matter. What mattered was that he was getting *real* help for the first time.

By the 6th day, Chilton took a look at Will's assessment and physical progress and gave the order to take Will off the sedatives and onto something lighter. Most of the staff was nervous about this, but carried out the commands as followed.

That afternoon, Chilton called Alana and Hannibal to let know that they were going to wake Will up. Alana hurried over to the hospital as fast as she could, whereas Hannibal claimed

that he had several clients that day and could not attend.

When Alana arrived, they had already taken Will off anesthesia, however he was still unconscious. This was perfect for Alana since she discussed wanting to be the first face that Will saw after he woke up- any face other than Chilton's would be an improvement. She sat beside his bed, Chilton standing in the doorway, and two nurses at Will's other beside, all eager to watch their most notorious patient awake.

After about half an hour, Will softly began to stir, his fingers twitching and his eyes moving under his eyelids.

"...Will? Can you hear me?" Alana asked softly, knowing that after a week in a coma, it was going to take time for Will to return to his full senses.

Will's head tilted ever so slightly towards Alana's voice, his eyes fluttering.

"Will, it's Alana. I want you to squeeze my hand twice if you can hear me," she said, reaching and holding his trembling hand, his wrists bound to the bed by medical restraints. Slowly but surely, Will's hands began to curl weakly around her's, then unfolded limply, and after a pause, squeezed her hand once again.

Alana smiled, finally feeling for the first time in almost a week that Will was actually there in the room with them. She almost didn't know what to say to him now that he was somewhat conscious. She had been thinking of all the things to say to him for days now, but as soon as she felt his hand wrap around hers, all thoughts of anything evaporated.

Will then began to cough faintly, suddenly aware of both the breathing and the feeding tube shoved down his throat. He released Alana's hand and weakly began to struggle- clear that if his hands were free, he would grab them and yank them both out with one pull.

He whimpered softly- the only noise he was physically able to make in the state he was in- and flexed his hands, trying to wriggle his way out of the restraints, but Alana places a hand over his wrist.

“No, no, shhh...Will, it’s ok...” she soothed, placing her other hand over his shoulder. “You’re safe. If you can hear me, you’re safe.”

Chilton glanced over at the nurses, who awkwardly glanced back at him.

“Can you open your eyes for me?” she asked him.

Several moments passed before Will’s brow furrowed and his eyes slowly opened for the first time in a week. His vision was blurry and unfocused and the light seemed to pierce his eyes. Alana on the other hand was elated to finally see him somewhat aware.

“Hey there,” she greeted him quietly, tilting her head so she could enter his field of vision easier. “Welcome back.” His eyes slowly made their way over to her as she smiled softly.

He blinked several times, clearly trying to bring his vision into focus

“Do you know where you are right now? Blink once for yes, twice for no,” she continued.

Will slowly looked around the hospital room, the white walls and blurry figures not registering in his mind.

He blinked twice.

“You’re at the hospital,” Alana answered, contemplating even saying the second part of her sentence. “You’ve been in a coma for a week.”

Will was having an enormously difficult time processing the information given. He frowned and slowly turned back to Alana with wide, confused eyes. It was then that he suddenly became aware of his body- and in turn- all the things sticking in, on and out of it.

He began to cough again, cognoscente of the feeding and breathing tube shoved down his throat. He clawed at the bed in a fit of panic, with every second becoming more and more lucid of his situation. He tried reaching for the tube in his throat, his wrists tugging weakly against the restraints, but Alana quickly subdued him.

“No, no, no- don’t touch that-,” she chided, quickly leaned over the bed and clasped her hands over his. Will’s eyes spoke more than anything- he was terrified and betrayed. “I know you want the tubes out, but they need to stay in for just a few more minutes, ok? Will?” Alana told him calmly, still holding his hands in hers.

Will continued to struggle, hearing her, but at the same time not. All he could think about was how he was awake, how he was taken advantage of, and much he wanted to rip the tubes out of his throat.

“Will-Will. Look at me, Will!” Alana called to him, raising her voice. He didn’t listen, continuing to writhe against the restraints in hopes of jostling the needle from his arm.

“Can I please have a moment alone with him?!” Alana called to Chilton and the nurses.

Just when the nurses were about to object, Chilton hushed them and hurried them out, following behind them and shutting the door quietly.

Alana turned back to Will, who was still frantic and completely tuned out. “Will! Will, stop!” Alana yelled, suddenly grabbing both sides of his head and pulling his gaze back up to meet her’s. He froze immediately, letting out a small, subtle whine and staring into her eyes, drawing his attention away from the confusion and hurt that enveloped him. “...I know you’re scared, and I know that you’re in shock, but I need you to calm down or you’ll hurt yourself,” Alana explained calmly. “...Nod if you understand.”

Will paused, stared up at her with his green, doe-like eyes, then slowly nodded.

“Good. I know it’s early and you’re still adjusting, but I need you to try to listen and follow along,” she began, letting go of his face and holding a finger out in front of him. “Follow my finger,” she directed, moving her hand from one side of his view to the other. He silently obeyed.

“Good,” she whispered to herself. “Can you ball both your hands into fists?”

Will did just that. “I don’t even have to ask you if you can move alright,” she joked. “I don’t think I’ve seen anyone have that much energy after being asleep for that long.” Will frowned.

“How do you feel? Are you in pain?” she asked, taking the hand closest to her. “One squeeze for yes, two for no,” she added again. Will squeezed once, then coughed slightly, to emphasize the tubes. “I know, I know and I’m sorry. They’re going to take out the breathing tube in a bit. The other one...that one stays in for a while,” she answered honestly. Will whimpered. He absolutely despised the idea of the doctors- and Chilton by proxy- having constant 24/7 access to put whatever they wanted in his body. If he felt like he was losing control before, then this was hell.

“Why don’t we talk about something else?” Alana asked, noticing his agitation rise. “Squeeze my hand once if you’d like me to keep talking to you about other things. Squeeze twice if you’d just like me to sit with you for a while,” she directed.

Will stopped and looked back at her, then down to her hand. Slowly, he squeezed her hand again, just once this time.

Alana smiled and playfully squeezed his hand back. “Alright then, why don’t I tell you about this new book I’ve been reading my niece lately,” Alana began.

As she told the tale of a mice king and his servants, Will’s heart rate began to slow and his nerves began to calm. Alana had always done a great job at making him feel safe, and this time was just another example from it. He shuffled slightly in the bed, his hand firmly wrapped around hers and allowing her to mentally take him far off the hospital grounds and towards somewhere lighter.

## Chapter 10

Will was taken off the breathing machine about fifteen minutes later when the head doctor arrived. That little bit of control he had over his breathing was enough to make his day, even with the feeding tube still in. The tape that held the tube to his face was itchy and was always tempting him to pick at it, but Will was trying to gain some brownie points with the guards by being on his best behavior, so he left it be.

Several days went by before Will started regaining his strength as well as his other senses. He went through a brief period of physical therapy, specialists coming in to help him gain a bit more of the muscle back that he lost during that week. They allowed him some exercise- letting him walk up and down the hall of the infirmary, his IV pole held loyally beside him and his feet shuffling softly against the linoleum. He hated having to bring the pole with him as it carried the bag of sand-colored nutritional substance that was still dripping into his stomach through the feeding tube, but he tried to ignore it and continue on. Slowly, but surely, Will began to look more and more like he did before.

Will began requesting to see Hannibal more often. Every evening, he would politely ask if Hannibal was available to meet. The first few times, the nurses called Chilton, who then called Hannibal about scheduling a session with Will, but Hannibal began coming up with excuses. His schedule was either too full or he had an important client the next morning; there was always something. At first, Will remained calm and polite when asking for Hannibal. During each of his daily physicals, Will would ask if the doctor had gotten any of his messages or if he was planning on visiting at any point. It all seemed rather innocent. Will was still very fragile and had little energy so none of the staff really considered him a threat anymore- at least up until Will's feelings turned to frustration.

Nurses asked Will the next morning if he wanted to try something orally, but Will hesitated. Instead, he asked again for Hannibal. "Dr Lecter is unavailable for the next several days," a nurse told Will as he sat on one of the chairs beside the bed, his hands laying in his lap.

"No, he's not," Will shot back. "Where is he?"

"Mr Graham, if you'd like to speak to a psychiatrist or a--"

"I'd like to speak with Dr Lecter," Will answered almost automatically.

"I'm sure there are plenty of hospital-issued psychiatrists that would be happy to help you in--" a nurse tried to answer, but was interrupted.

"I said I want to speak to Dr Lecter!" Will yelled, his temper rising. "What part of that don't you understand?!" It was difficult to yell with the feeding tube still inserted and taped to the side of his face. Yelling was even more difficult, but Will pushed through the pain.

“Mr Graham, please calm down-“

“I know what’s going on...You’re all in kudos with each other because you all KNOW that I’m right, but you’re working with *him*? You’re working for *him*, aren’t you? To keep me here all tied up and docile- just the way he likes?!” Will yelled, standing up, but still leaning on his pole for support.

“Mr Graham, sit down-“

“That’s all any of you have wanted, isn’t it? For me to sit the fuck down?!” Will said, moving closer. The nurse paused, backing away slowly. “Is all that you sons of bitches care about is shutting me up and locking me away? I’m a human being for gods sake! I’m a goddamn human being!” Will yelled. At this point, two armed guards had heard the commotion from the hallway and quickly barged in. They saw Will, unrestrained and screaming at the two nurses and immediately took action, grabbing his arms and shoving him face-down on the bed.

“AUGH! GET OFF ME! GET OFF!” Will yelled as the guards yanked his arms behind him and handcuffed him.

“Please be careful!” one of the nurses cried out to the guards, who were being far too rough with a man who had woken up from a coma only a couple days before.

“Yea, like you all *actually* give a fuck!” Will yelled at the nurse, which only made the guards shove him down harder, causing Will to grunt out in pain. The guards held him down, a hand over his neck, bending over on the bed until the cuffs were secure around his wrists.

“Mr Graham, if you don’t remain calm we’ll-“

“You’ll what? Stick a needle in my arm and knock me out again?! Is that all you people know how to do?!” Will yelled, his voice muffled slightly by the bed sheet.

“We should call Dr Bloom...” one of the nurses quietly told the other.

“Yes! Thank you! Go get Alana- she’ll tell you I’m right!” Will called back, shuffling under the guards grip.

The two nurses exited the room to send out a call to Alana, knowing that she was currently the only figure of some authority who Will would listen to. In the meantime, the two guards grabbed Will by his collar and yanked him up off the bed, marching him over to the chair and shoving him in. Will fell back on the seat with a soft grunt, uncomfortably crushing his hands which were handcuffed behind his back. The guards stood over him in watch, waiting for the nurses to return with the phone while Will glared up at them like a child who’d been sent to a time-out.

About a minute later, a nurse arrived with a phone and told Will that Alana was on the line for him. Seeing that Will was handcuffed and couldn't hold the phone, she held it up to his ear and put it on speaker, since all phone conversations still had to be monitored.

*"Will?"* Alana's voice rang from the phone.

"Alana, tell them I'm right- Tell them what's happening," Will yelled into the speaker.

*"Will, what's going on? What are you talking about?"* Alana answered back, thoroughly confused.

"Where's Hannibal?" Will asked all-of-the-sudden.

*"...Hannibal? What is this about?"* Alana asked.

"I need to speak to Hannibal-now. I know he's avoiding this- avoiding me."

*"Will, Hannibal is a busy man. I'm sure he's trying to find time for you-"* Alana tried to explain, but was cut off immediately.

"You all know he's avoiding me because he knows that he put me here. He's a fucking coward.

*"You don't sound like yourself- please, just do what the nurses tell you to do. I'll reach out to Hannibal again if that'll help you sleep better,"* Alana replied.

"I will not rest until I see him. I swear to god- I've been too docile about this for too long," Will threatened. The nurses nervously made eye contact with each other, dreading yet another one of Will's episodes.

*"Don't do this again. You've worked too hard to do this to yourself again,"* Alana begged.

"I will-I swear to god I will! Get him here, Alana," Will ordered.

*"Will, for Christ's sake, what's gotten into you?! I'll talk to Hannibal, but you have to calm down and please just do what the doctors say,"* Alana cried, clearly frustrated trying to calm him.

"They're not in control anymore, Hannibal isn't in control anymore, Chilton isn't in control anymore; I am. I'm in control," Will barked back, leaning away from the phone and quickly turning to the nurse. "Hang up," he snapped.

The nurse frowned and exited the room instead to discuss with Alana a plan of action in case Will actually tried to start this whole charade over again. In the meantime, Will was marched back to his bed while the staff waited in apprehension at what Chilton would think of this whole debacle. There was no way he'd allow another one of Will's strikes again.



## Chapter 11

That night, Will was sent back to his bed in the infirmary. He was still furious about Hannibal and how the staff had seemingly been ignoring his requests for him. It felt like Chilton, Hannibal, the hospital, and all the nurses and guards were all in on the same little game of poking and prodding at Will, like a tiger in a cage, waiting for it to strike back. As he'd stated before, he hated being docile in this whole operation. He hated feeling like a victim of so many people. All he wanted was his dignity back.

That night, the nurses offered Will dinner that night and asked if he wanted to try and physically eat something, but he refused, so they continued feeding him through the tube. For the past week since he'd woken from the coma, he hadn't caused any trouble about sleeping. He'd gone to bed at a reasonable hour every night without needing to be restrained to the bed or under a 24/7 watch. The nurses all thought that this was over- up until that night.

The time was around 11:30pm. Will was sat on the side of his bed, looking solemnly at the ground when a nurse arrived. "Lights out, Mr Graham. In bed, please," the nurse told him sternly.

"Or what?" Will replied under his breath.

The nurse was taken back. "Mr Graham, you know what will happen if you're not cooperative," the nurse replied.

Will didn't respond.

The nurse sighed and exited the room to phone Chilton on the walkie. Several days ago, Chilton had given the orders that if Will was to become insubordinate again, he was to be chemically sedated and have his reading privileges taken away for the next day, as well as issuing a mandatory therapy session in the morning. This didn't seem to phase Will. Moments later, the nurse plus the same two armed guards from earlier that day stormed into his room. The nurse arrived with a loaded needle.

"Mr Graham, we're going to ask you again," the nurse replied, readying the syringe.

"Bite me," Will barked back, suddenly grabbing the IV in the crook of his arm and ripping it out, blood spurting from the needle point.

Guards immediately grabbed his arms, quickly ripping the needle from his hand before it could have been used as a weapon. They shoved him onto the bed, but before they could pin him down, Will suddenly kicked the closest guard in the stomach, shoving him off temporarily so he could push himself back up. While the guard was down, Will reached over and tore the needle from his grip and swung it at the guard next to him. The guard grabbed

Will's wrist in mid-air, but Will used his other leg to kick him in the groin, knocking the wind out of him. Will wriggled his wrist free and jumped over the two officers, trying to make a break for the door, but the barrels of four handguns quickly met him.

"Not this time, Graham," an officer behind one of the guns spoke calmly.

Will stopped in his tracks- he didn't really know what to expect or what his plan was after he got through the door. He barely had a plan in general for how this would go- he was just taking things day by day.

"Put your hands on your head and get on the bed," another officer commanded as they closed in on him. Will slowly, but reluctantly obeyed, scowling at the group as he backed up. Will took his time in walking to the bed, trying to hide his pure frustration. He knew that they'd force him to sleep one way or another if he didn't comply, but at this point it didn't matter- he just wanted to get under Chilton's skin- to show that he would not be a submissive captive. Chilton was right when he said that this was a battle Will couldn't win, but he was sure as hell gonna put up a fight.

"Lay on the bed and don't move," the speaking officer directed Will. Will snarled at him, but eventually did just such. As soon as Will laid flat on the surface, nurses quickly descended on him, looping his wrists and ankles into the medical restraints and wrapping one final strap around his chest to make sure he didn't lunge at them.

Will looked up at the terrified nurses, the two officers on the ground, and the four barrels pointed at him.

Right then and there something shifted.

He saw the fear in all their eyes. He peered over at the two officers he assaulted, then over at his sleeve, the light fabric staining with blood from him ripping the needle from his arm. He saw in that moment that he was becoming the person he was trying to convince Chilton that he wasn't; violent, impulsive, unpredictable, and mentally unstable.

He hated being tied down in the way he was, but the only difference between now and then is that now, they were doing it to protect themselves from what Will had actively become. At least before, Will knew he was innocent and had no intention of actually hurting anyone. He was trying to prove his innocence and assaulting police officers and cussing out nurses was hurting only himself. At this point, did he actually deserve to be locked away? Was he truly a danger to society?

He gazed up at the staff members with their uneasiness and distrust, and a tear dripped down his cheek. "Oh god...I'm sorry. I'm so sorry-" he spoke softly, turning to the nurse who approached him with a new needle. She walked to his other side and rolled up his clean sleeve to tie a tourniquet around his bicep.

"I didn't mean to hurt anyone- I didn't mean to do this," Will sobbed as she flicked the inside of his arm to find a vein. She aimed the needle and skillfully inserted it in, Will letting out a soft whimper. "Just tell Chilton please. Tell him I want to change and that I'm sorry," Will pled, turning to the guard on his opposite side. "I want to change. I want to change. I want to be better." Soon, the nurse was injecting the sedative into his veins, but this time, Will didn't fight it. He rested his head back, relaxed his body, closed his eyes voluntarily, and breathed in shakily as a single tear tracing down his cheek. Before he could realize it, he was out cold.

The guards and nurses all shared a surprised glance, not expecting to hear those words from Will. Nevertheless, they breathed a sigh of relief, pulled a blanket over him, and exited the room to prepare yet another report of Will attacking an officer, as well as relaying his message to Chilton.

## Chapter 12

Hannibal sat in his office that evening, organizing files and preparing to pack up for the day, when suddenly his work phone began to ring. He hesitated, sensing that it wouldn't be good news, but slowly picked up the receiver and held it to his ear.

"Hello?"

"Hannibal, it's Alana. We need to talk about Will," Alana spoke.

Hannibal froze and sat up a little straighter. "...Alright," he replied softly.

"When's the soonest you can come to the hospital?" She asked

"Alana, I've already discussed with Frederick-"

"He needs you, Hannibal," Alana said finally.

"...What?"

"He's refusing sleep again," Alana added. "It's possible that he'll try again to go as long as he can."

"Oh, dear..." Hannibal could only reply.

"Only this time, he told me that he won't sleep unless you meet with him."

"..."

"Hannibal?"

"I'm here,"

"You're all he talks about. He believes you're deliberately avoiding him- and I'll be frank with you- it's proving to be very detrimental to his mental health," Alana explained. "If you can just take a half an hour to visit him and talk this over with him. He's still refusing to eat as well- he needs help."

"...Alana, isn't there a part of you that fears that Will is using this as a means of manipulation? By just threatening starvation-" Hannibal argued, but Alana quickly cut him off.

"Hannibal, what are you so afraid of?" Alana asked him. Hannibal didn't respond. "Please- just half an hour with him. He needs you," Alana asked him again.

Hannibal paused. Alana was right; he was terrified of confronting Will. He felt close to little remorse in the beginning when he framed him, but seeing him in the state he was in changed his perspective on everything. It was true that it was his fault for everything that Will had gone through, but he knew that ignoring Will would either anger him or help him understand that Hannibal was out of his life for the time being. He knew this was unfair to Will, and that by ignoring his requests for a visit, it was only angering him more. The only way to fix this situation was to confront it. Perhaps he could even mend his relationship with Will and possibly help Will see him in a better light- then it would be a win-win.

“...Will you help him, Hannibal?” Alana asked after a brief moment of silence.

“...I can get there tomorrow by noon,” he finally agreed.

“Thank you. I’ll see you then,” Alana answered and hung up.

## Chapter 13

Will woke late that morning, achy and groggy. He looked down at himself and saw that he was still strapped down to the bed. He tried to sit up a bit, but the strap around his chest restricted him. He grunted and slammed his head back on the pillow in frustration. It was clear he was annoyed, but he'd learned something from the night before: Being cooperative doesn't mean being complicit.

He looked up at the IV beside the bed and noted that the feeding tube was still inserted and taped to the side of his face. Maybe if he tried eating something orally, it would win him some points with the nurses. He knew that gaining everyone's trust back was not going to be an easy path, but what other choice did he have at this point? Whatever he was doing wasn't working so the other option was proving that he could be a changed man.

The sound of the door unlocking disrupted his thoughts. A nurse in a white coat and blue scrubs entered through the door and approached Will's bed. He picked up the clipboard posted at the foot of the bed and scribbled several notes down with a pen he took from his right breast pocket.

Will debated whether to say anything to him, whether it be a simple "good morning" or "hello," but he decided to keep his mouth shut for the time being.

He watched as the nurse casually took his vitals, trying to do whatever he could to make the nurse's job easier. He lifted his arm up slightly when he wrapped the blood pressure cuff around his arm and didn't even have to be asked to take a deep breath when the stethoscope disk met his skin. When the nurse was finished, he scribbled more notes down on the clipboard and hung it back on the end of Will's bed and exited without saying a word.

Will sat alone in silence for several minutes, waiting for anyone to walk in the door or acknowledge him in any way. At best, he hoped Alana would visit that day- not because he wanted to rant and rave at someone, but just for companionship. As cheesy as it sounded, all he wanted in that moment was a non-condescending voice telling him that everything was going to be alright.

The door opened again, but this time it was the last person Will wanted to see.

“Good morning, Will,” Dr Chilton smirked as he crossed the room, standing at the right side of Will’s bed.

Will didn’t reply.

“How are we feeling today?” he asked.

“...Fine,” Will answered quietly.

“Well ‘fine’ seems like an improvement to me. Care to explain what happened last evening?” the doctor asked.

Will figured that the only way out of this situation was to concede and give Chilton what he wanted. Fighting him in every step of the way wasn’t working and he needed to change his strategy. “I lashed out and it was wrong of my to do so,” Will said.

Chilton raised an eyebrow.

“I wasn’t getting what I wanted and I figured that the only way that people would listen to me was if I caused a scene- and again, that was wrong of me,” Will further explained.

“And what did you want, Will?”

“I wanted to see Dr Lecter,” Will stated.

Chilton smiled softly. He couldn’t wait to give Will the good news.

“Would you *still* like to see Dr Lecter?”

“...No,” Will answered honestly.

Chilton’s smile dropped.

“No?”

“Dr Lecter doesn’t want to see me and that’s fine. I don’t want to see him anymore,” Will answered.

Chilton frowned. “Now you *don’t* want to see him?”

“I have nothing I want to say to him,”

“I think there’s *a lot* of things you’d like to say to Dr Lecter,” Chilton observed.

In truth, Will *did* have many things he'd like to tell Hannibal, but at this point, he'd learned that Hannibal and everything relating to him was bad for him. Hannibal was the one that framed him and put him in a place like this, but Will didn't expect the extent of how much damage Hannibal could do even while Will was behind bars. All of this tied back to Hannibal; the lack of sleep, the starvation, the outbursts, and Will truly believed that in this moment, Hannibal didn't care. If Hannibal has given a shit about him, he would've accepted his first request several months back, meaning Hannibal was either a prick, a coward, or both. Whoever he was, Will decided that he no longer wanted Hannibal in his life. He had brought nothing but misfortune in his life and was not worth any of the battle.

Chilton on the other hand was less than pleased about Will's decision to cut ties. It'd taken a bit of effort to find a compatible date with Hannibal, and now that the time was set, having Will suddenly change his mind was anything but convenient. In truth, Chilton was hoping to use this as a method of incentive for Will. One meeting with Hannibal for a cooperative psychotherapy session in which Chilton would hope to unlock more of Will's suppressed memories. Now that Will's desire to see Hannibal was gone, so was that incentive and Chilton expected Will to be just as, if not more uncooperative now that he had nothing to gain.

"What do you want, Will?" Chilton finally asked.

"...I want to go back to my cell," Will answered.

"You're not going anywhere while you continue to starve yourself and deprive yourself of sleep. We've been over this," Chilton quickly responded. Will knew he had to give in to either food or sleep, but his mind was still at odds with itself. He wanted to comply, but there was still a part of him that was so used to refusing both; fighting that part of himself was not going to be easy.

"Then I'd like to be alone," Will peeped.

Chilton huffed and glared down at Will, who refused to make eye contact and instead just gazed out the barred window that overlooked the parking lot. Chilton scoffed and turned on his heel, exiting the room without another word.

The rest of the day went by slowly for Will. As per orders, Will was denied any of his daily reading material and was kept restrained to the bed for the remainder of the day. At around 9pm, a new nurse that Will had never seen before came into the room with a tray of several syringes of different sizes. She first gave Will his dinner, injecting a syringe full of sand-colored liquid into his feeding tube. Will gagged and coughed as he felt the liquid trickle down his throat. She ignored him and continued onto the smaller syringe, sticking it directly

into his IV. Will mentally noted that at this point, the staff naturally expected him to cause a scene when asked to go to sleep, so they stopped even asking it of him and just sedating him on the spot.

"I don't need the drugs tonight," Will spoke up, watching her secure the needle in the port.

She ignored him and continued preparing the tranquilizer.

"I can sleep on my own," Will added again, this time a bit louder.

She didn't even look in his direction, still focusing on her work. She quickly injected all the contents into his veins, removed the needle and placed it back on the tray.

Will immediately began to feel the effects, breathing in shakily as his limbs began to go numb. "Ughh..." He desperately looked up at the nurse again in hopes that she'd possibly look back, but she didn't. She simply picked up the tray, turned away from him and left the room, the door locking behind her. Will's eyelids fluttered, fighting time keep them open for just a moment more, but failing, finally falling deep into the familiar embrace of artificial sleep.

# Chapter 14

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The next day, Will was woken by a firm hand shaking his shoulder. He'd apparently slept until almost 1 in the afternoon.

"Mr Graham...Mr Graham!" A male voice called.

Will groaned softly and cranked open his eyelids to see two armed officers and two nurses standing at the foot of his bed.

"Mr Graham, get up. You have a visitor," the first nurse said again.

"...What?" Will croaked back, shuffling lightly under the restraints.

"Can you walk?" the second nurse asked as they quickly undid the straps from his ankles, wrists and chest.

"I don't know," Will answered honestly as the first nurse helped him sit up and bring his legs over to the side of the bed.

Will's feet met the floor, but his balance was thrown off and he stumbled forward. A guard caught him before he could tumble over, then called to the officer on his left to bring him a wheelchair from outside the room. They quickly brought it in and parked it besides Will's bed. They hooked his IV and bag connected to the feeding tube on the IV pole on the chair and propped him up into it, secured him down and began wheeling him down the hallway back towards the main building of the hospital. They exited the infirmary and made it to one of the old interrogation rooms. They buzzed the door, and entered. Will looked up at what was before him and his face went pale.

There was a small table set in the middle of the room with two chairs on either side- both secured to the floor. The lights above flickered softly and on the other side of the room was a mirror that was obviously two-way. Sitting at the right side of the table in the middle of the room was no other than the man Will had been begging to see for weeks now.

“...Hello, Will,” Hannibal spoke to him.

Will blinked back in shock. Hannibal Lecter sat in the chair on the right, wearing one of his signature plaid brown suits. There was a large leather bag beside him

*“No, no, no,”* Will whispered, turning his head around to the nurse pushing his wheelchair to beg her to turn the other way and take him back to his hospital room.

“Please, come sit with me,” Hannibal asked, gesturing to the seat at the end of the table.

The nurse pushed Will up to the table, unstrapping him and preparing to place him in the chair opposite Hannibal. Will struggled weakly, but to no avail, as he was set down in the chair and yet again, was tied down by his wrists, ankles, and chest. He began to hyperventilate softly as the nurses unhooked the IV bags and hooked them onto the pole beside the chair before exiting the room, leaving him all alone with just Hannibal and whoever was watching behind the two-way mirror; Alana and Chilton in this case.

“He’s been asking for Hannibal for what seems like ages,” Alana mentioned to Chilton, who was cross-armed and glaring at the man through the glass. “It’ll be interesting to see how this goes.”

Will avoided eye contact and instead looked at the door, his chest heaving.

“It’s good to see you again, Will,” Hannibal told him. Will didn’t reply, continuing to breathe quickly and avoid his gaze. “I was under the impression that you’ve been wanting to see me.”

“I didn’t,” Will shot back.

“Oh? You haven’t been asking the nurses for a visit like this every day for a week? Repeating to the point of violent escalation? Injuring staff members?” Hannibal asked accusingly. Will scowled and subtly twisting his wrists in their restraints, balling his fists. Hannibal looked down at him, then back up and sighed, turning and digging his hand into his bag to reveal a pair of blue medical rubber gloves. He slid them on with a snap and stood up from his chair to approach Will.

“What are you doing? Stay away from me!” Will yelled, recoiling back in his seat, trying to scoot away as Hannibal walked up to him. As the doctor’s slowly hands came for Will’s face, Will turned his head in the other direction, squeezing his eyes shut. “Stay still, please. Let me see this...” Hannibal said, gently taking Will’s jaw and bringing it back towards him. Will still kept his eyes shut as Hannibal stripped off the tape holding the feeding tube to Will’s cheek. Hannibal sealed the port on the feeding tube and placed a friendly hand on Will’s shoulder.

“Just relax. Take a deep breath,” Hannibal instructed.

Will was incredibly tense, but still found the energy to obey Hannibal and inhale shakily.

Hannibal put a gentle hand over Will’s forehead and tilted his head back ever-so-slightly.

“One, two...three,” Hannibal counted down before gripping the feeding tube and sliding it out of Will’s esophagus with surgical skill.

Will gagged and coughed, not fully expecting the extraction to be so fast and unanticipated. Hannibal disappeared behind Will, disposing of the tube and the gloves and returning with a tissue, wiping Will’s nose and mouth. “Better?” Hannibal asked.

It was actually. Being able to breathe through his nose and swallow without pain was something he’d forgot the feeling of. He didn’t realize the difference that having that obstruction out would do, and for that he was genuinely thankful to Hannibal- however anyone could have removed the feeding tube. He knew that Hannibal only did it to win him some trust back, nevertheless, he was still appreciative. “...Thank you,” Will croaked. “You’re welcome,” Hannibal answered, sitting down in the chair opposite Will again and crossing his hands on the table.

Alana and Chilton watched apprehensively through the window, both having absolutely no idea of what Hannibal’s plans were beyond this point.

Will and Hannibal sat in silence for several moments before Hannibal finally spoke up.

“I’ve come to understand that you believe I’ve hurt you,” Hannibal told him.

“Is that your way of saying you’re sorry?” Will replied.

“...Sorry for what, Will?” Hannibal questioned, brow furrowed. In truth, he knew exactly what Will meant, but was just trying to push Will into speaking his mind.

“...Are you *fucking* kidding me?!” Will yelled, the first time he showed genuine anger in front of Hannibal since their confrontation in the Hobbs’ kitchen.

“You really have no idea why I would be even slightly upset with you?!” Hannibal stayed silent, allowing him to continue.

“You used me, manipulated me, and pushed me into looking like this insane, homicidal, broken man all for your own sick satisfaction. You know my life used to be alright before I met you! I had a house and a job and dogs and none of this bullshit over my head. Now I have nothing! I have nothing- don’t you understand that?! You’ve taken everything from me!” Will screamed at him, his fists clenching the arms of the chair.

Hannibal’s brow softened as he heard Will speak, and for once, he was completely speechless.

“You can sit there with your combed hair and your fancy suits. You can go home to your little palace and have your parties with your friends, but I’m stuck here and it’s because of you. I could be at the institute teaching right now or back home with my dogs or doing anything else, but you’ve put me here. You decided that whatever was happening in your life wasn’t enough so you clawed your hooks into me- but why me?! Why did it have to be me?!” Will continued, tears welling up in his eyes.

“I hated sleeping because every time I closed my eyes I saw your face. I hated sleeping because it left me alone with just me and my thoughts about you. I hated sleeping because it allowed others to take advantage of me in the same way you did. You’ve drugged me, exploited me, and now you’ve broken me. Every day I asked for you and requested you and you ignored me. I don’t doubt that you found some sort of sick pleasure in knowing how often I would request to see you, and you wading in your filthy ego. I’m not an object or an animal that you can toy and play with and poke and prod until you get bored and toss me away! I’m a goddamn human being!” Will yelled. That line hit Hannibal like a boat. “I may never recover from this when I get out of here- IF I get out of here. I still have life to live and I’m wasting away in here- all because you can’t take accountability,” Will spat. Alana, Chilton and Hannibal were all dead-silent. Will continued, “Can you even begin to imagine how it feels to know that you were the one that killed all those girls and that *I’m* the one paying the price for it?!”

“This is completely unproductive. He’s speaking nonsense,” Chilton scoffed under his breath.

“Just give him a few more minutes. Let’s see where this goes,” Alana answered.

“I’m drowning in here. I’m running in a race that has no finish line and I don’t know what to do about it. I don’t know whether to fight you or give up- I don’t know what I’m supposed to do anymore. I’m just tired! I’m tired and I’m starving and I feel like I’m dying. When will any of this be enough for you?! I feel like shit all the time and it’s like you couldn’t care less! I know my best option is to forget about you, but you’re all I think about and it’s killing me! Can’t you see you’re killing me!” Will cried, tears streaming down his face.

The two men sat in silence for several moments, just staring at each other in anticipation for the other's reaction. Hannibal knew how much Will finally needed to get those words out in the open, but hell, did it hurt to hear. Hannibal sighed, looked down at his hands and contemplated everything Will said. He deeply considered standing up and agreeing to leave Will alone for this point onward, but he held his ground and stayed put.

"Well...?!" Will called. "Say something!"

"I'm...very sorry you feel that way, Will," Hannibal finally peeped. "You know I've only wanted the best for you."

"No actually- I don't know that," Will shot back.

Hannibal sighed again.

"I'm sorry I let you down, Will," he finally said. Will went silent. "I never wanted this for my you. I'm so sorry you had to experience this," Hannibal said, removing the handkerchief from his pocket and reaching over to wipe Will's tear off his cheek. He flinched at first, but eventually let the doctor get near him and dry his tears. "I wish I could shield you from all this," Hannibal added, realizing that he had to be very careful with his words so that he doesn't release a full frontal confession of his guilt. He had to apologize to Will while still confirming Will's state to Chilton and Alana. "If I could take it all back, I would. I wish I saw the signs earlier before this spiraled out of control in the way it did. I'm so so sorry," Hannibal told him sincerely.

Will softened a bit at Hannibal's apology. He never expected to get one from him so hearing the words "I'm sorry" definitely put him a bit at ease. It didn't fix the problem, but it helped a bit on his mind.

"You're a good man, Will. All of this happening to you is a tragedy and there isn't a day that goes by when I don't think of you," Hannibal continued. Will's anxiety began to ease. Yes, there was hypocrisy in Hannibal's words since Will still firmly believed that Hannibal planned from frame him and have him incarcerated for as long as possible, but there was something in the doctor's tone of voice that truly convinced Will that he was sorry. It dampened the flames of his anger and set him temporarily at ease.

"I can't change the past, Will, but I can absolutely help change the future," Hannibal said, bending over to pick up the large black bag he came in with. Will frowned as he watched Hannibal unzip the bag and pull out several Tupperware boxes and utensils.

"What is that?" Will asked nervously.

“Braised pork seasoned with caramelized brown sugar and garlic mixed with seasoned carrots and mixed greens,” Hannibal answered, opening up the bin. It looked incredible and smelled even better, but as soon as Will realized what it could be, he immediately felt sick to his stomach.

“I’m not eating that,” Will quickly said, chills running down his spine.

“You need to eat, Will,” Hannibal insisted.

“Do you seriously think you can fix all this by making me dinner?” Will asked angrily.

“Of course not, but it can help with the hunger,” Hannibal answered earnestly.

“I’m not eating anything with meat- especially if you made it,” Will added.

“I’m afraid you have to,” Hannibal jotted back.

“Put the tube back in- I don’t care. I told you I’m not eating that.”

“You’re not getting the tube. You’re going to sit here and eat this meal I made for you,” Hannibal held him.

“I don’t care if it took all night to make. You can’t force me,” Will argued.

“I could force feed you; you’re in no position to resist- but I’d prefer not to resort to that. Rudeness, however, is something I cannot tolerate,” Hannibal answered.

Will stayed silent, glaring at the doctor. After everything he’d said, he couldn’t believe Hannibal would push him into eating potentially a victim of a crime possibly similar to the one he framed him for.

Hannibal picked up the fork and knife and began cutting it into smaller sections. He stabbed a square of meat and held it up to Will’s mouth.

“Open up,” Hannibal said plainly.

Will said nothing but continued to scowl at him, not breaking eye contact. Hannibal didn’t move. The two men stared each other down, waiting for the other to break. “I can do this all day, Will. The only way you’re leaving this room is if you eat. There’s no way around it,” Hannibal told him plainly. Will leaned back a bit in his chair and smirked. This method had worked with Chilton in the past. Why would this time be any different.

And thus the stare-down commenced.

Fifteen minutes passed, then another fifteen minutes, then more than an hour had gone by and both men hadn't moved from their spots. Chilton and Alana were growing very impatient. By the third hour, Chilton was at his wits end. The monotony of this situation was dragging out and everyone in and behind the room was growing frustrated- except for Hannibal. The doctor was totally calm and collected, as if barely five minutes had gone by and not almost four hours. Will started having a difficult time hiding his anger. It didn't take nearly this long with Chilton.

Will turned to the two-way mirror on the wall and without seeing her, seemed to stare directly at Alana with a look that read, "please don't make me do this."

"It's ok, Will. It's ok..." Alana mumbled to herself. Chilton glanced over at her briefly, then back to the scene in front of him. Will turned back to Hannibal, who hadn't turned away from him. Will stared directly in his eyes, trying to read whatever body language to see if Hannibal was breaking in the slightest. He wasn't. Will realized that he had much less power in this situation than he'd thought. He thought that he was the one waiting on Hannibal to break, but it was the other way around. Hannibal was the one in control.

Will began to drop his act. His scowl melted, his mouth twitched, and his eyes slowly welled up with tears. Hannibal saw this, but didn't budge. Finally, Will broke. He began to quietly sob, head sinking to his chest. Hannibal watched half-sympathetically as his former patient crumbled before him.

"Will," Hannibal said quietly, standing up and bringing the chair closer to him. "Will, it's alright."

Softly, Hannibal took Will's hand in his. Will wanted to rip his hand away or struggle or give Hannibal any inclination that he didn't want to be touched, but he didn't for some reason. Hannibal thumbed over Will's bony hand affectionately and smiled softly. "Will, I need you to eat," Hannibal told him, picking up the fork with the now-cold piece of meat. Will looked up, tears trailing down his face. Hannibal removed his handkerchief from his pocket and gently dabbed Will's cheek.

"Can you do that for me, please?" Hannibal repeated. Will sniffed and after a brief pause, finally nodded. Chilton and Alana watched in amazement as Hannibal lifted the fork to Will's mouth, and miraculously, for the first time in weeks, Will ate his first bite. Despite being cold, it tasted incredible-he didn't expect anything less. Bite by bite, Will slowly finished the meal until his stomach ached and nausea began to sink in.

“You did very well, Will. I’m proud of you,” Hannibal finished, setting the Tupperware back in his bag.

“I...I think I feel sick...” Will mumbled.

“I might have something to help with nausea,” Hannibal said, digging his hand back in the bag and pulling out a pack of store-brand pills.

“No, no...I’m not taking any pills...” Will cried, his anxiety going from a 2 to an 8 in less than a second.

“They’re to ease your stomach. That’s all,” Hannibal replies, popping two pills out of the case and setting them down, picking up a reusable bottle of water to wash it down.

“How do I know you aren’t going to drug me or give me something that will hurt me or make me foggy or-“

“I suppose you’re just going to have to trust me, then.”

Will breathed in shakily and twisted his wrists in the restraints nervously. He felt absolutely sick to his stomach, but what purpose would drugging him have now? He already got out what Hannibal, Chilton and Alana wanted to hear, he already ate for the first time in weeks- what more did they want from him in that moment? His thoughts were interrupted by a loud gurgle from his stomach and the feeling of bile rising in his throat. Will groaned softly and looked back up at Hannibal with a grimace.

“Okay, okay, okay-“ he finally said, leaning forward as much as he could while Hannibal skillfully popped the pills in his mouth and held the water to his lips so Will could wash it down.

After a few gulps, Hannibal set the bottle back on the table and screwed on the cap.

“Just give that a few moments,” Hannibal added, putting the bottle back in his bag and folding his hands down on the table. Will breathed in a few shaky breaths and gulped, realizing how bizarre the feeling of being full felt. When he thought about what exactly was potentially filling him up, then it made him feel even more sick so he tried to mentally avoid it for the time being. On the positive, he started feeling the energy come back to him, already feeling the effects of having eaten a healthy meal. It was a feeling he wouldn’t mind experiencing again.

“Thank you, Will. I know how hard that was for you. I need to ask one more thing of you tonight, okay?” Will looked up, as if to silently ask what it was.

“I need you to sleep.”

Will furrowed his brow, almost hurt that Hannibal would ask that of him.

“Please, Will. You’ve done so much work today, but the work isn’t over until you put this day to rest-yourself included,” Hannibal explained. Will realized on a separate note that if Hannibal had given him mind-altering drugs, they would have started working at this point. He also noticed his nausea was subsiding slowly. Hannibal had been true in his word.

“...You didn’t drug me,” Will thought out loud.

“No, I didn’t. This is a task you need to do on your own,” Hannibal stated. Will looked down at the table, then down at himself, bound to the chair. He in that room because he had broken the trust of everyone around him. He couldn’t be expected to sit in a chair without hurting himself or others. It was beyond humiliating, and Will blamed himself. “Will you do that for me? Will you sleep tonight?” Hannibal asked.

Will hesitated in answering. He wanted to say no, but something deep down in him was compelled to get better. “Ok,” he answered quietly.

“...Thank you, Will,” Hannibal answered proudly, as if he had cracked the case of the century.

He peered at the clock on the wall- it was about then back at Will with a soft smile. “I think it’s time we end our session now,” Hannibal said finally. “You did very well.”

Will didn’t respond.

“I’d like to increase our time to weekly sessions. Would that be something you’d like?” Hannibal asked.

“...Yes,” Will peeped.

Hannibal stood up, picking up his bag and walking up to Will. He placed a hand on the seated man’s shoulder kindly and smiled. “Take care, now, Will,” the doctor said as he quietly walked to the door, the buzzer letting him out, and sauntering out of the room, like a soldier returning home from victory.

Behind the glass, Alana and Chilton sat silent. Alana blinked, picked up her purse and coat from the chair behind her and turned to Chilton with a look that read, “I told you so,” and left the room.

Will sat alone in the interrogation room for several moments, wondering what had just happened and trying to contain the plethora of emotions waving over him. Suddenly, the door buzzed again and two guards arrived to unstrap him from the chair and set him back in the wheelchair. They tied him back in and wheeled him out of the room and into the hall, but this time, they didn't make the turn for the infirmary. This time, they took the elevator back to the main cell block.

Will inhaled shakily as he realized that were placing him back in his cell. Was his recovery over? Was it all finished that quickly? Will didn't know the answer, but was pleasantly surprised. As they made the turn to Will's cell block, they finally stopped at the end cell. Will noticed that the floors had been cleaned and the sheets were made. It was like returning to an unwelcome, but familiar home.

The guards rolled the wheelchair into the cell and removed the wrist, ankle and chest restraints and pushed him to the bed. They lifted him, much more gently than usual, and set him down on the cot. They turned away from him, wheeled the chair out of the cell, and closed the door, locking it automatically.

Will laid in his bed, staring up at the flickering light on the ceiling and the cold stone walls. He hated admitting it to himself, but that session with Hannibal had calmed his mind. It felt like Will was losing a battle for so long, fighting with every fiber of his being to stay afloat and not give into any of the taunting or the torment. He'd pushed away all chance of self improvement for spite, and it ruined him. It worsened his physical and mental state and all for nothing. All this time he'd obsessed over power and control when all along, the power was within his own pursuit of personal health. He needed to start looking out for himself. If his plan was to carry out his sentence as fast as possible, he couldn't do it the way he had been. He needed to take control in his own way.

He sighed, curling into a fetal position and holding himself in his arms. He breathed deeply, feeling his chest expand and contract mechanically. He ran his hand protectively over his stomach, then over his ribs.

He closed his eyes, sunk deeper into the bed, and for the first time in what felt like years, Will slept.

END

## Chapter End Notes

Thank you to everyone who read my little fic! <3

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!